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U.S. MILITARY INTERACTION WITH HUMANITARIAN  
ASSISTANCE ORGANIZATIONS DURING SMALL-SCALE  
CONTINGENCIES

by

David R. Hinson, Major, United States Air Force

A Research Report Submitted to the Faculty

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Advisor: Major Forrest C. Wentworth

Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama

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## *Preface*

This paper is the result of an interest of mine in humanitarian interventions since I was assigned to Operation PROVIDE COMFORT in the winter of 1993. While there, I was essentially in charge of the humanitarian program for the U.S. in northern Iraq. We spent upwards of forty million dollars in the four months I was running the operation. The funds were primarily for basic necessities such as food and fuel for approximately 300,000 Kurdish people. As such, this paper is dedicated to anyone who has ever supported a humanitarian operation.

The objective of this paper is to identify ways we (the U.S. military) can improve our working relationship with humanitarian assistance organizations. This is a fairly new military operation and doctrine is still evolving. By improving our interaction with these groups, we can more effectively provide support to those in need while reducing duplication of effort and minimizing what I would call our “trials and tribulations.”

I would like to thank my advisor, Major Forrest Wentworth, USA, for putting up with my considerable close calls on deadlines and for all of his advice on the direction of this paper. I would also like to thank the interlibrary loan department at Air University for assisting me in getting some of my most vital sources. In addition, I would like to thank Robert Weaver for helping me to proof and edit my rough drafts.



### ***Abstract***

How effectively does the U.S. military interact with humanitarian assistance organizations and what avenues exist for improving these relationships? During recent military operations other than war (MOOTW), now known as small-scale contingencies (SSC), the U.S. military has worked with numerous humanitarian assistance (HA) organizations such as nongovernmental organizations (NGO), private voluntary organizations (PVO), and international governmental organizations (IGO) like the United Nations. These organizations are often on site and actively working prior to the military's arrival within the region. As a result, there are many ways that HA groups and the military can assist or complement the efforts of each other. Many experts predict that these types of SSC efforts will increase in the foreseeable future. Assuming this is the case, increased and improved interaction between military and HA organizations will become imperative. This paper is the result of a literature review conducted to examine recent U.S. military interaction with HA organizations in regional conflicts such as northern Iraq, Haiti, and Bosnia. The primary sources include periodicals, books, government and private reports, doctrine and online sources in the 1990s. It also draws on the author's personal experience supporting HA efforts in northern Iraq as a member of Operation Provide Comfort.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

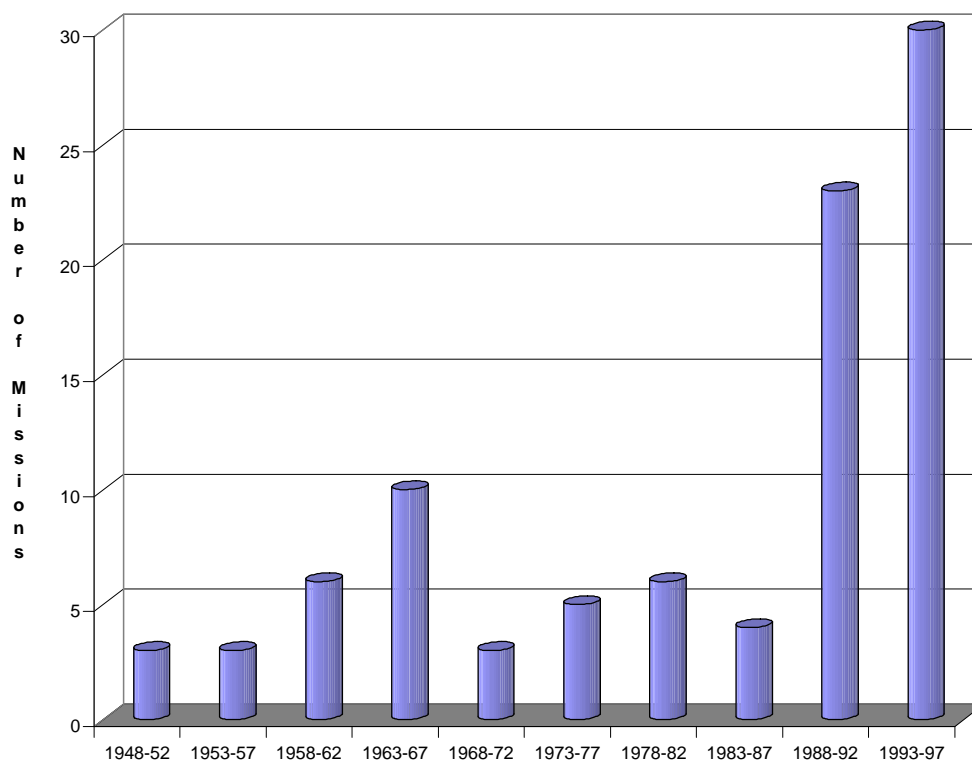
*The Commander...will find that, short of insuring the protection of his force, his most pressing requirement will be to meet his counterparts in the U.S. Government, UN, and NGO hierarchies and take whatever steps he thinks appropriate to insure the smooth integration of military support...*

—Lieutenant General Daniel R. Schroeder, USA

### **Statement, Background and Significance of the Problem**

How effectively does the U.S. military interact with humanitarian assistance organizations and what avenues exist for improving these relationships? During recent military operations other than war (MOOTW), now known as small-scale contingencies (SSC), the U.S. military (hereafter referred to as “the military”) has become increasingly involved in humanitarian assistance (HA) efforts throughout the world. These operations range from Panama in 1989-90 to northern Iraq from 1991 to 1997 to Bosnia for the past three years. Throughout these HA efforts, the U.S. has found itself interacting with numerous HA organizations. These organizations range from nongovernmental organizations (NGO), like Care Australia, to private voluntary organizations (PVO), such as Interaction, to international governmental organizations (IGO), such as the United Nations. U.S. governmental organizations like the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) can also be considered an HA organization.

These HA organizations are often on site and actively working prior to the military's arrival within the region.<sup>1</sup> As a result, there are many ways that HA groups and the military can assist or complement one another. Many experts predict that these types of SSC will increase in the foreseeable future.<sup>2</sup> As noted in Figure 1, overall the number of peacekeeping related missions has grown considerably since 1948.<sup>3</sup> Of those missions in the last ten years, the U.S. military has been involved in six (Panama, northern Iraq, Haiti, Somalia, Rwanda, and Bosnia) with significant HA aspects. Assuming this trend continues, mission success may well depend upon effective interaction between the military and HA organizations.



**Source:** Government Accounting Office (GAO) Report, “U.N. Limitations in Leading Missions Requiring Force to Restore Peace,” (GAO/NSIAD-97-34 United Nations, 27 March 1997): 31-35.

**Figure 1. Peacekeeping Related Missions since 1948**

Humanitarian organizations have their own agenda, goals and desires. In many ways they have created their own culture of providing relief to people in need.<sup>4</sup> A review of current literature has found little in the way of textbook approaches to this type of interaction although numerous articles and position papers discuss the topic from many perspectives. The military has incorporated some guidance to working with the various HA organizations into their joint doctrine. Is existing guidance enough or can more be done to ensure the military and HA organizations work together toward achieving the most effective humanitarian support possible? That is the question this paper hopes to answer.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This paper is based strictly on a study of humanitarian interventions as a form of SSC. While interaction with HA organizations may occur during other types of SSC, such as peacekeeping operations, only those elements relating to HA are addressed. The research method used to discuss the problem and to provide potential solutions is primarily a literature review. Prior to 1990 there is little discussion on HA efforts or interaction between the military and HA organizations. Since 1990 the number of studies and articles on the subject has proliferated,<sup>5</sup> probably due to the increased involvement with humanitarian intervention by the military. This paper will briefly examine recent U.S. military interaction with HA organizations in regional conflicts that occurred in northern Iraq, Haiti, and Bosnia. The primary focus is to assess this interaction at the strategic/operational level as opposed to the operational/tactical level. The result will be a look at means to improve this relationship before an HA effort is required. Sources include periodicals, books, government and private reports, doctrine and online

documentation. Other sources include briefings conducted at Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) during the 1998 school year and my own experience supporting HA efforts in northern Iraq as a member of Operation Provide Comfort.

## Definitions

Definitions are found in the Glossary to this paper.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Joint Warfighting Center, *Joint Task Force Commander's Handbook for Peace Operations* (16 June 1997): II-2.

<sup>2</sup> Michael O'Hanlon, "Political and Military Criteria for Selective Humanitarian Interventions," *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, vol. 4, no. 2 (Summer/Fall 1997): 23.

<sup>3</sup> The information in Figure 1 is derived from data gathered by the GAO in their report "U.N. Limitations in Leading Missions Requiring Force to Restore Peace," GAO/NSIAD-97-34 United Nations (27 March 1997): 31-35.

<sup>4</sup> Babu Rahman, "International NGOs and the 'New Humanitarian Agenda'," Workshop on Understanding Security and Development in Africa, University of Wales, Aberystwyth (8 Mar 1997). On-line. Internet, 9 March 1998. Available from <http://www.aber.ac.uk/~bbr94/mypaper1.htm>. This thought is also derived in part from a commentary on NGOs by Daniel Papp, *Contemporary International Relations*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Macmillan College Publishing Co., 1991): 156 and Minutes, Conference Report: Improving Coordination of Humanitarian and Military Operations (US Department of State: 23 June 1994).

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Weiss, "A Research Note about Military-Civilian Humanitarianism: More Questions than Answers," *Disasters*, vol. 21, no. 2 (1997): 97.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

*The best defence of peace is not power; but the removal of the causes of war...the grim fact, however, is that we prepare for war like precocious giants and for peace like retarded pygmies.*

—Lester B. Pearson  
Nobel Prize Winner for Peace, 1957

To best determine the effectiveness of interaction between the military and HA organizations, a literature review of three recent military operations was conducted. The following provides a summary of each and looks at the overall military and HA organization involvement and the interaction between them. At the end of the chapter is a review of current doctrine on HA.

### **Operation Provide Comfort (northern Iraq)**

#### **Military Involvement**

Operation Provide Comfort began in April 1991 to aid Kurdish refugees fleeing into the mountains of eastern Turkey to escape reprisal by the Iraqi government in the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War. The U.S. military was the first to arrive on the scene due to their close proximity and at the request of the Turkish government. They immediately provided blankets, shelter, food, medical care and other support to ensure the Kurdish people survived the harsh winter conditions in the mountains. Due to the

isolated location involved, the military initially airlifted most of the aid and then began a program of trucking in aid from Turkey. Their main objectives were to relieve the Kurdish suffering, end their repression by the Iraqi government, and eventually resettle them into their homes and villages<sup>1</sup>. Over time a coalition force, led by the U.S. and Turkey, was set up to manage the military effort. Despite political concerns by the U.S. on “impinging on Iraqi sovereignty”, the coalition established “a security zone in northern Iraq” on April 16, 1991.<sup>2</sup> By mid-summer, the military presence became primarily that of logistical support and of security assistance designed to protect the Kurdish people while ensuring the safety of the HA personnel.<sup>3</sup>

### **Humanitarian Assistance Organizations Involvement**

This massive undertaking caught HA organizations off-guard. The humanitarian assistance organizations were initially unprepared to support the refugees and came in days after the military. OFDA’s Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) became the initial focal point for aid by HA organizations, arriving on the scene 10 days after the military.<sup>4</sup> OFDA was quickly followed by many NGOs who, working together, provided aid based on their various specialties and skills. These HA groups provided medical care, food, blankets, tents, and other basic necessities of life. They also worked to resettle the Kurdish people and to help them establish new homes and schools. The DART provided grants that would eventually total almost twenty-seven million dollars to NGOs to support the HA effort.<sup>5</sup> In May 1991 the overall humanitarian program was turned over to the UN and a civilian-military coordination center was set up in Zakho, Iraq. However, the DART stayed and continued to support the other HA organizations in their efforts.<sup>6</sup>

## **Interaction between the Parties**

Considering the intervention was completely unforeseen, overall the interaction between the parties was very good.<sup>7</sup> In some respects the suddenness of the relief effort probably worked in its favor since at this time interaction between the parties was a new concept.<sup>8</sup> While some problems arose, they were primarily limited to attempts by the military and the HA groups to understand each other and to determine the best means to help the Kurdish refugees. As the number of HA organizations increased and as conditions stabilized, the military turned over control of the relief effort to OFDA and the UN. Capt Chris Seiple, USMC, in his research report, "The U.S. Military/NGO Relationship in Humanitarian Interventions," stated the following observation was made during the initial part of the effort:

There were five factors that contributed to success....First, despite the fact that the American military was in charge of the coalition responsible for Provide Comfort the...OFDA DART was, in effect, managing the situation and establishing strategy. Second, military commanders on the ground recognized and used the DART expertise. Third, the Special Forces initially sent into the Turkish mountains were absolutely critical in stabilizing the situation (to include the establishment of an initial rapport with the NGOs). Fourth, the Army Civil Affairs officers, responsible for NGO interaction/coordination, particularly in Zakho, were exceptional people with a clear understanding of the situation at hand. Fifth, the NGOs had the same caliber of people leading their effort.<sup>9</sup>

Another issue that helped cooperation between the parties was the military recognition that by supporting the HA organizations, it would reduce their (the military's) need to provide humanitarian support.<sup>10</sup>

The U.S. Congress became concerned in 1993 with the way U.S. aid was used in northern Iraq. This concern forced an oddity in that the military became responsible for all U.S. humanitarian aid in northern Iraq during 1994 (approximately eighty-five million dollars). For the first time the military, instead of OFDA, awarded grants for



humanitarian assistance. While the relief effort continued unabated, it did hamper long-term development of the region. Unlike OFDA, the military is legally prohibited from directly supporting development efforts. Over time, this situation was reversed and OFDA again became the lead U.S. agency for providing HA in northern Iraq.<sup>11</sup>

## **Operation Restore Democracy (Haiti)**

### **Military Involvement**

After the legitimate government of Haiti was overthrown in 1991, the U.S. government and its allies worked to reinstall it as the ruling power.<sup>12</sup> While a military invasion was planned for late September 1994, it was averted at the last minute due to deft negotiations on the part of key U.S. diplomats.<sup>13</sup> As part of the Operation Restore Democracy, the military found itself providing HA, primarily free medical care, although food and other aid was also provided initially.<sup>14</sup> The experiences in previous humanitarian interventions were drawn on in an attempt to achieve an orderly transfer of responsibility for relief efforts to the HA organizations.<sup>15</sup> The military began patrolling the cities and countryside of Haiti gathering weapons and working to restore peace and order. After peace was considered restored and the legitimate government of Haiti was back in office, the entire effort was turned over to the UN as a peacekeeping operation and the number of U.S. military personnel involved decreased dramatically.<sup>16</sup>

### **Humanitarian Assistance Organizations Involvement**

While some HA organizations were already in the area providing primarily basic medical care along with other limited support when the military arrived, they were not immediately prepared to take over the relief effort, an expectation of the military.<sup>17</sup> The

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) was supposed to arrive with the forces and begin coordinating the relief effort on behalf of the military. However, they could not find transportation and did not arrive until 10 days later.<sup>18</sup> This initially slowed down the HA effort, but after the legitimate government of Haiti was restored, the program increased significantly. Working under the auspices of the United Nations, the HA organizations began extensive programs to begin long-term development of the country.<sup>19</sup>

### **Interaction between the Parties**

Some prior planning actually occurred between the parties, however due to policy debates on how to ensure the Aristide government was restored, the actual planning meeting was delayed until 12 September 1994, only days before the operation began.<sup>20</sup> Once the parties were in Haiti, these efforts became tangled in discordant objectives. The people on the scene had little exposure to the interagency planning made prior to the beginning of the operation.<sup>21</sup> The military's main goal was to restore order, ensure the stability of the legitimate Haitian government, and then turn the operation over to the UN.<sup>22</sup> The military expected the HA organizations to take over immediately the relief effort with little support provided.<sup>23</sup> Since the USAID personnel were delayed in arriving, there was no one available to immediately head up the relief program. Conversely, the HA organizations onsite wanted to begin long-term development, but expected the military to understand their needs and to support their efforts.<sup>24</sup>

Long-term development requires a different mind-set than just providing aid. It focuses on making the people self-sustaining. For example, the offering of free medical care by the military was likely viewed by the HA groups as working directly against this

goal. NGOs usually require some form of minimal payment, payment-in-kind, or an acceptance by the people being supported of long-term medical risks. This can include some means of birth control, proper sanitary conditions, etc. Thus, providing medical care was not seen by HA organizations as helping the people in the long run.<sup>25</sup>

Other problems developed, including the military need for “operational security” which limited the flow of information from the military to the HA organizations.<sup>26</sup> The military did establish a Civil-Military Operations Center (CMOC) to coordinate efforts with the HA organizations, but it was placed in an area where the HA personnel had limited access.<sup>27</sup> The military also wanted one person in charge of the overall operation, to include the efforts of the NGO/PVOs, while these HA organizations preferred a cooperative arrangement.<sup>28</sup>

These and other issues led in some cases to alienation between the parties. As noted in the report from the “Workshop on Interagency and Political-Military Dimensions of Peace Operations: Haiti - A Case Study,” edited by Gary Wheatley and Margaret Hayes:

Three assumptions underlined military planning for the Haiti operation, and none of them was correct. The first assumption was that lifting the embargo would result in an immediate inflow of money; the second was that NGOs and PVOs would immediately undertake a massive nation-building activity, and finally, that money would flow once the U.S. was on the ground. While these assumptions were clearly too optimistic, they reflect a view of the unfolding of the post-entry interagency process in which the military expected civilian agencies to respond to the operation like the military itself did - with a fully-planned implementation.

Over time these issues were resolved, but in the interim they hampered the HA effort.

## **Operation Joint Endeavor (Bosnia)**

### **Military Involvement**

Operation Joint Endeavor began as a result of the Dayton Peace Accords in 1995 and continues to this day. Sponsored by the UN, Operation Joint Endeavor is a NATO-led mission involving forces from 36 countries.<sup>29</sup> Bosnia was split into three sectors; each managed by a different coalition force. The goal was to restore order and to end ethnic persecution by all parties.<sup>30</sup> The U.S. military was given a mandate of one year to achieve these objectives. By the time a year had passed, it was apparent that it was going to take considerably longer to help restore peace in Bosnia. It also became apparent that if the U.S. military pulled out, other nations might as well.<sup>31</sup>

### **Humanitarian Assistance Organizations Involvement**

HA organizations have been working on the scene in former Yugoslavia for years, painstakingly and sometimes seemingly without hope, to help provide relief to the people suffering from the internal war.<sup>32</sup> Since 1991, USAID has provided more than one billion dollars in HA to all of former Yugoslavia. These funds have been used by NGO/PVOs to provide basic necessities such as emergency shelter repair and by local communities to provide municipal infrastructure and services. They have also gone to support reconstruction financing, postwar economic transformation, and democratic reforms.<sup>33</sup> After the Dayton Accords went into effect, these efforts have increased and their effectiveness has increased as well. The HA groups are now primarily focusing their efforts on establishing an internationally led police force and implementing an effective civilian government structure in Bosnia.<sup>34</sup>

## **Interaction between the Parties**

The relief effort itself has gone well overall since the fighting stopped. The parties are beginning to learn from the experiences of the past and appear to be fostering a more cooperative atmosphere. A combined joint civil military cooperation directorate (CIMIC), essentially a CMOC, was established to guide the coordination process and to ensure that the parties cooperate on the overall humanitarian assistance effort.<sup>35</sup> The NATO-led military is primarily focused on providing security and logistical support in the region and is working to support the HA organizations in their efforts. Unlike the humanitarian intervention efforts of the past involving mostly U.S. forces, the NATO-led military, through the CIMIC, has been “involved on virtually every level of rehabilitation and reconstruction in Bosnia.”<sup>36</sup>

## **Joint Operations Doctrine on Interaction**

In 1990 little joint doctrine existed on interaction with outside agencies. Since that time many of the publications issued by the military have begun to address this shortfall. For the most part the doctrine focuses on interaction with other U.S. agencies, but *Joint Pub 3-08, Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations, Vols I and II* provides detailed information about HA organizations and some basic guidance on interaction. Table 1 provides a listing of current and draft publications that discuss interaction with HA organizations.

**Table 1. Publications Addressing HA Interaction**

<b>Publication</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Joint Pub 3-0	Doctrine for Joint Operations	1 February 1995
Joint Pub 3-07	Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other than War	16 June 1995
Joint Pub 3-07.3	Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (JTTP) for Peacekeeping Operations	22 April 1994
Joint Pub 3-07.6 <sup>37</sup>	JTTP for Humanitarian Assistance	Draft
Joint Pub 3-08	Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations, Vols I and II	9 October 1996
US Army Field Manual 100-23-1, et al	Multiservice Procedures for Humanitarian Assistance Operations	October 1994
Joint Warfighting Center, not numbered	Joint Task Force Commander's Handbook for Peace Operations	16 June 1997

While the number of joint publications addressing this type of interaction is growing, the amount of guidance provided on planning is fairly limited, especially at the strategic/operational level. For example, the only comment Joint Pub 5-0, *Doctrine for Planning Joint Operations*, makes on HA is as follows:

Functional plans involve the conduct of military operations in a peacetime or permissive environment. These plans are traditionally developed for specific functions or discrete task...but may be developed to address functional peacetime operations such as disaster relief, **humanitarian assistance**, peacekeeping, or counterdrug operations.

As a result, each combatant command within the military with geographic responsibilities is left to develop separate methods for interagency cooperation in concert with the Department of Defense (DOD).<sup>38</sup> One combatant command, the United States Pacific Command (USPACOM), has worked to resolve this dilemma by adding a member of USAID, the parent organization of OFDA, to their J-3 planning staff.<sup>39</sup> At the operational/tactical level, the *Joint Task Force Commander's Handbook for Peace*

*Operations* provides an excellent discourse on working with HA organizations in the field.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Capt Chris Seiple, *The U.S. Military/NGO Relationship in Humanitarian Interventions* (Peacekeeping Institute Center for Strategic Leadership: U.S. Army War College, 1996): 23-24.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 22-23.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>11</sup> David Hinson, personal experiences as the officer in charge of humanitarian support for northern Iraq from November 1993 to April 1994.

<sup>12</sup> Gary Wheatley and Margaret Hayes, Report. Workshop on Interagency and Political-Military Dimensions of Peace Operations: Haiti - A Case Study, 24 May 1995 (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, February 1996): 18-23.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>14</sup> Gen J.J. Sheehan, *Operation Uphold Democracy: U.S. Forces in Haiti*, Executive Level After-Action Review (1996): 41 and 49.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Wheatley and Hayes, 30 and 42, and Sheehan, 39.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 30-33.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 34-38.

<sup>22</sup> Sheehan, 16.

<sup>23</sup> Wheatley and Hayes, 38.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> This paragraph is drawn from two sources. (1) Personal experiences of the author working with NGOs in the field and from many discussions with these and other parties on the inner workings of NGOs. And (2) the USAID Agency Performance Report (1996): 5-21/22. On-line. Internet, 9 March 1998. Available from [http://www.access.gpo.gov/su\\_docs/gil/gils.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/gil/gils.html).

<sup>26</sup> Wheatley and Hayes, 54.

<sup>27</sup> Sheehan, 40, and Wheatley and Hayes, 31 and 54.

<sup>28</sup> Wheatley and Hayes, 44 and 50.

<sup>29</sup> Lt Col Pamela Brady, "Joint Endeavor - The Role of Civil Affairs," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, no. 16 (Summer 1997): 45-47.

## Notes

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Capt Steven Drago, "Joint Doctrine and Post-Cold War Military Intervention," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, no. 14 (Winter 1996/1997): 109.

<sup>32</sup> Col John Tuozzolo, "The Challenge of Civil-Military Operations," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, no. 16 (Summer 1997): 54-58.

<sup>33</sup> USAID Agency Report: 5-1.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Brady, 45-47.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> "The Joint Publication System," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, no. 14 (Winter 1996/1997): 40-41.

<sup>38</sup> Joint Pub 3-08, *Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations*, Vol. I: I-3.

<sup>39</sup> Seiple, 185.



## Chapter 3

### Obstacles to Effective Interaction

*In Many Instances, NGO are the end of the line - without them there is no hope.*

—Barbara Smith  
International Rescue Committee

While efforts are underway to improve interaction between the military and HA organizations, progress is slow. This chapter examines obstacles that hamper further cooperation at the strategic/operational level.

#### U.S. Political Objectives (or Lack Thereof)

During a humanitarian intervention, the military's mission is expected to derive from the U.S. national security strategy.<sup>1</sup> The objective could be to support U.S. interests on behalf of allies, public concern, to support democracy, etc. These objectives are often different from those of the HA organizations involved, especially those of NGOs and IGOs<sup>2</sup>. A study of the U.S. political objectives, or lack thereof, provides a critical perspective on how the military operates during an HA effort.

In many cases, senior policy makers view HA as separate from traditional political concerns, instead focusing on “moral issues.”<sup>3</sup> The effect of this view is twofold. Military operators in the field are often provided little or unclear direction. This was apparent in Haiti where the military personnel in the region had little understanding of the

overall picture. The planners in Washington, D.C. had worked with HA organizations prior to the operation to delineate responsibilities. However, few of these planners actually deployed with the initial military force and did not communicate guidance “effectively to the operational level commanders.”<sup>4</sup> Once the military began operating in Haiti, the local commanders made decisions based upon the needs as they saw them. This resulted in difficulties occurring that could have otherwise been avoided.<sup>5</sup> Military operators, without proper guidance, will make policy/decisions according to their own needs, often confusing military means with humanitarian needs.<sup>6</sup>

The second effect is that HA operations are seen as ancillary to the military mission of restoring peace and order. The military’s perspective is too often viewed as one of getting in, fixing the immediate problem, and then getting out.<sup>7</sup> This was evidenced in Bosnia, where the initial military plan was to send troops for only one year.<sup>8</sup> By the time one year was up, basic peace and order had been restored, yet the underlying problem was still unresolved. To provide for a long-term peace often requires a long-term commitment, something the U.S., especially the public, has a difficult time accepting.<sup>9</sup>

Another issue is that senior American leadership and the public do not accept the idea that casualties will occur during HA efforts.<sup>10</sup> Although the Somalia mission, Operation Restore Hope, is not directly addressed in the literature review above, its result supports this assertion. Once casualties began to occur in Somalia, the American leadership and its public began to believe our efforts were futile. This was one factor in our ultimate pullout of that particular operation.<sup>11</sup>

## **HA Organizational and Cultural Differences**

A number of differences become apparent when you examine the role of NGO/PVOs and those of IGOs in an HA effort. These differences can lead to consternation on the part of the military unless they are understood. For example, NGO/PVOs prefer to work autonomously for the most part and take a dim view of actions they construe as the military trying to manage their efforts.<sup>12</sup>

These organizations often do not accept the military role in HA and will work to achieve their own goals and objectives, regardless of military support or cooperation.<sup>13</sup> As a result, they may not cooperate with the military in a relief effort, again losing an opportunity for collaborative support.<sup>14</sup> According to Mary Schoebel of Interaction, an U.S. based PVO, in a recent ACSC briefing, NGO/PVOs actually prefer consensus building to coordination.<sup>15</sup> This is a concept that is somewhat foreign to the military.

NGO/PVOs normally do not have their own forum for interface. Thus, they often have no coordination process of their own.<sup>16</sup> In some cases there could be many NGO/PVOs providing relief in the region.<sup>17</sup> Depending upon the objective of each organization, this can actually hamper the relief effort.<sup>18</sup> The UN attempts to coordinate the efforts of the disparate HA organizations, but its success is often limited.<sup>19</sup> The International Red Cross (IRC) has developed a code of conduct to use in HA efforts as a means to address this issue.<sup>20</sup> Its use is beginning to gain support by the UN and other agencies and organizations.<sup>21</sup> Other parties have created a NGO field coordination protocol that is designed to enhance their internal coordination during an HA effort.<sup>22</sup>

## **Military Organizational and Cultural Differences**

The military has its own issues and concerns that can affect HA operations. One central theme is the idea of security. Recent experiences in Somalia, Bosnia and Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia have led the military to focus on ensuring the safety of our troops and other personnel.<sup>23</sup> As noted above, casualties are not normally considered acceptable in an HA effort. As a result, the military may focus on security to such an extent that it can actually limit the overall effectiveness of the humanitarian effort.<sup>24</sup> Risk is to be expected in war, but is not an acceptable concept in HA.<sup>25</sup>

The military mindset during any operation is to be in complete charge.<sup>26</sup> In other types of SSC this is not a problem. Until Operation Provide Comfort, the military had little need to interact with HA groups and was not concerned with developing synergetic relationships with them. In an HA operation, as noted above, this can have a negative effect since it can limit the involvement and cooperation of HA organizations, thereby reducing collaborative efforts.<sup>27</sup>

Another issue is perseverance.<sup>28</sup> When a relief effort turns to nation building, reconstruction or development, it can effect the military's desire to continue operations. The military, as well as the American public, is normally averse to what it calls "mission creep" and may want to pull out before the situation is entirely stable.<sup>29</sup> One cause of this is that either the military or its senior civilian leadership may have either poorly defined the exit strategy or not defined it at all. When it is defined, it is often not clearly stated to all parties involved, especially to the American public.<sup>30</sup> As a result, the military does not understand that "mission creep" is actually a natural, although possibly long-term, progression that provides an opportunity for gradual transfer of responsibility to the HA

community. The perception of “nation building” is considered shortsighted by HA organizations and leads them to view the military as strictly a short-term player.<sup>31</sup>

Limited experience in HA efforts is another shortfall on the part of the military. For one, the military does not understand the long-term goals and objectives of the HA community in a relief effort.<sup>32</sup> In addition, due to the military policy of rotating its personnel, people who gain experience in the arena move on to other jobs once that particular tour of duty is complete. This limits the military’s overall effectiveness since each HA operation is almost like “starting over from scratch” from an experience perspective. This continual transfer of responsibility can also influence an ongoing operation. In many cases, it forces military personnel to try to do things “by the book,” even though there is limited guidance to determine what that is.<sup>33</sup>

### **Minimal Doctrine on HA and Interaction**

While the amount of doctrine on HA operations is minimal, it is growing. For example, a joint pub currently in draft focuses specifically on humanitarian assistance. Hopefully its release will help to alleviate this shortfall. For the present, however, the military has limited guidance for planning for humanitarian interventions. This leads to numerous problems, especially at the outset of any HA operation (just consider the problems encountered in Haiti).

One key element that the military has not been aware of, and does not often appreciate, is the role of HA organizations during a relief effort.<sup>34</sup> As noted above, this can lead to the military either duplicating the efforts of HA personnel or even acting in a manner which can be detrimental to the long-term development of the people being helped. Assuming military personnel have access to and use Joint Pub 3-08, *Interagency*

*Coordination During Joint Operations, Vols I and II*, this area may become less of a concern. However, it does little to help in the planning process at the strategic level without some means of ensuring that coordination/collaboration occurs. Joint Pub 3-08 states that coordination is appropriate and that it should occur, but the means is not defined except at the onset of an operation.<sup>35</sup> For strategic direction, Joint Pub 3-08 does state that interagency coordination will occur at the Department of Defense level.<sup>36</sup> However, no process has been established to ensure this occurs so it is conducted ad hoc.<sup>37</sup> For HA organizations, this can be disconcerting since the military overall does not provide a single forum for them to use.<sup>38</sup> The primary interface used at this time is USAID, but their interaction with the military is still minimal.

The exit strategy is also not identified upfront as a key doctrinal element. While it may be discussed, it is not clearly defined and communicated in terms understood by all parties. When the exit strategy is defined, it may not allow for the long-term commitment often necessary in an HA environment.<sup>39</sup>

In the tactical arena, the CMOC is often unavailable to the HA organizations due to its location, as in Haiti. While Joint Pub 3-8, Vol. I, does describe the functions of the CMOC, it does not clearly describe the best means to organize it to foster significant collaborative efforts.<sup>40</sup>

Another area of concern is that HA organizations and the military have different definitions for common terms such as end state, conflict resolution, objectives, etc.<sup>41</sup> Misunderstandings on terms and terminology can lead to problems communicating objectives and desires until these conflicts are understood and resolved.<sup>42</sup>

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Joint Pub 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations* (1 February 1995): (1 February 1995), I-4.
- <sup>2</sup> Minutes, "Conference Report: Improving Coordination of Humanitarian and Military Operations" (US Department of State: 23 June 1994).
- <sup>3</sup> O'Hanlon, 23.
- <sup>4</sup> Wheatley and Hayes, 35.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>6</sup> Seiple, 172.
- <sup>7</sup> O'Hanlon, 26, and Seiple, 178.
- <sup>8</sup> John Hillen, "American Military Intervention: A User's Guide," *The Heritage Foundation* (Backgrounder No. 1079: 2 May 1996): 10-11.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid., 12.
- <sup>10</sup> O'Hanlon, 27, and Seiple, 12.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid., 28.
- <sup>12</sup> Seiple, 58-59.
- <sup>13</sup> Joint Pub 3-08, Vol. I, I-9.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid., 6-7.
- <sup>15</sup> Mary Schoebel, Interaction. Lecture. ACSC, Maxwell AFB, Al., 8 January 1998.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> Maj Kay Russell, et al, "MOOTW: The More We Know." Research Paper (presented to The Armed Forces Staff College, 19 August 1997): 3.
- <sup>18</sup> Schoebel.
- <sup>19</sup> Schoebel, and Kay, 3.
- <sup>20</sup> Code of Conduct for the IRC and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief. On-line. Internet, 18 February 1998. Available from <http://www.interaction.org>.
- <sup>21</sup> Schoebel.
- <sup>22</sup> NGO Field Cooperation Protocol. On-line. Internet, 18 February 1998. Available from <http://www.aber.ac.uk/~bbr94>
- <sup>23</sup> Mark Roberts, "Hardening Overseas Presence: Force Protection," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, no. 14 (Winter 1996/1997): 117.
- <sup>24</sup> Seiple, 13.
- <sup>25</sup> O'Hanlon, 27-28.
- <sup>26</sup> Seiple, 58-59.
- <sup>27</sup> Schoebel.
- <sup>28</sup> Drago, 109.
- <sup>29</sup> O'Hanlon, 27, and Seiple, 180.
- <sup>30</sup> Drago, 109.
- <sup>31</sup> Seiple, 14.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid., 51.
- <sup>33</sup> Personal experiences of the author during Operation Provide Comfort.
- <sup>34</sup> Seiple, 51.
- <sup>35</sup> Joint Pub 3-08, Vol. I, ix and I-12.
- <sup>36</sup> Joint Pub 3-08, Vol. I, I-3.
- <sup>37</sup> Joint Pub 3-08, Vol. I, II-19.

## Notes

<sup>38</sup> Schoebel.

<sup>39</sup> Drago, 109.

<sup>40</sup> Joint Pub 3-08, Vol. I, III-16-19.

<sup>41</sup> Schoebel.

<sup>42</sup> Seiple, 11-13 and 54.



## Chapter 4

### Potential Solutions to Improving Interaction

*What's the relationship between a just-arrived military force and the NGOs and PVOs that might have been working in a crisis-torn area all along? What we have is a partnership. If you are successful, they are successful; and, if they are successful, you are successful. We need each other.*

—General John M. Shalikashvili  
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

While obstacles exist to improving interaction between the military and HA organizations, potential solutions exist that can foster communication and understanding. This chapter examines potential solutions that can enhance cooperation at the strategic/operational level.

#### **Define Political Objectives and How They Meet U.S. National Strategy Upfront**

Defining political objectives and how they meet U.S. national strategy upfront may sound simple, but it is not often done well. In northern Iraq there was no time and the people in the field essentially developed the strategy<sup>1</sup>. In Haiti the exit strategy was defined through specific mission objectives<sup>2</sup> and, although it occurred later than originally anticipated, the process was well managed.<sup>3</sup> In Bosnia, the exit strategy was set to a timeframe of one year.<sup>4</sup> However, after the year was complete, the military stayed and is still there. Time is clearly not a credible exit strategy.<sup>5</sup> The National

Command Authority (NCA), the President and the Secretary of Defense, must provide definite guidance and exit criteria to the combatant commander responsible for the HA effort. The exit strategy should also be communicated to the public, the troops and the HA organizations. Once this is done, planners will be able to develop processes and procedures for implementing the operation. The people in the field will also be able to understand their objectives and how it meets the national strategy. The best place to describe exit criteria in a broad context is within the National Military Strategy.

The NCA and Congress must convey to the public that casualties are a risk in any military operation whether it be war or an HA effort. If this is not acceptable, the military should not get involved.

### **Ensure Effective Crossflow Prior to HA Efforts**

Effective crossflow prior to an HA effort can occur in many ways. The concept used by USPACOM of having a liaison position with USAID appears very sound. The close coordination should ensure a clear understanding of the capabilities of both parties. USAID could also act as an interface for the military with all other HA organizations, but is limited by its size and own areas of responsibilities.

A better idea is to create an interagency working group (IWG).<sup>6</sup> The IWG members would include the combatant commands, Office of Secretary of Defense, Department of Humanitarian Affairs (OSD/DHA), the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), and USAID. The IWG would provide a set forum where the parties can discuss the best means for folding HA organizations into the planning process. One office, either within OSD/DHA or the JCS, should establish a permanent HA position. This person would be responsible for:

1. Coordinating with all HA organizations, be they U.S., IGO, NGO, or PVO.

2. Organizing the IWG.
3. Ensuring that HA organizations are represented on the IWG periodically.

The crossflow from this forum would be invaluable and would save an amount of time when an operation begins. One objective of the IWG would be to delineate clearly objectives, terms and areas of responsibilities upfront.

An idea has also been discussed to create an IWG under the National Security Council whose sole aim would be to discuss HA from the national perspective. This idea has merit and is worth further consideration.<sup>7</sup>

### **Incorporate Processes for Interaction into Military and HA Organizational Doctrine**

An effective means to ensure collaborative support by HA organizations in a humanitarian operation would be for everyone to agree upon and sign the Code of Conduct developed by the IRC. This would establish a basic level of understanding for all parties and would help the military to understand the essential role of HA organizations. Use of the NGO Field Protocol would help provide better coordination between the NGOs. These documents should be incorporated into Joint Pub 3-08, Vol. II, as appendices. The HA organizations should also consider establishing a forum at the strategic level similar to the IWG described above.

The CMOC requires greater visibility within the JTF and unhindered access by the HA organizations. Joint Pub 3-08, Volume I, chapter III, paragraph 8b should be modified to include the following:

1. The CMOC must be in a location where it is readily accessible to all humanitarian assistance organizations and to the commander.
2. The CMOC will report directly to the commander.

The HA organizations should consider establishing a forum in the field to coordinate with the CMOC and with the their strategic forum, assuming one is created.

Joint Pub 3-08, Volume I, chapter I, paragraph 2c should be modified to incorporate the IWG and its responsibilities and should also state that it is the strategic link to the operational and tactical levels. As time goes on, it is hoped the IWG would develop new doctrine and modify existing doctrine on HA to ensure a more comprehensive planning process.

Joint training on HA should be developed. Military personnel should not solely attend. HA organizations should also be invited to participate to provide crossflow of ideas and to achieve better understanding of their roles and objectives.

One last consideration would be to require the combatant commands to create off-the-shelf, generic functional plans for humanitarian assistance, just like a noncombatant evacuation operation (NEO) plan.<sup>8</sup> Since HA interventions often occur with little to no notice, this plan could then be used as the basis for implementing the operation.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Seiple, 54.

<sup>2</sup> Sheehan, 16.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>4</sup> Drago, 109.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Kay, 18.

<sup>7</sup> Seiple, 175.

<sup>8</sup> Joint Pub 3-0, V-10-11.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Conclusions**

*The very evils we associate with war have fallen upon mankind more fully in times and places well removed from battlefields and in conditions conventionally called peace. Especially in this century (twentieth), the victims of peace outnumber the victims of war.*

—Paul Seabury and Angelo Codevilla  
War: Ends and Means

### **Summary of Findings**

The interaction between the U.S. military and humanitarian assistance organizations was evaluated by reviewing three recent HA operations. The critique looked at the basic missions and accomplishments of each party and then considered positive and negative elements of cooperation. Joint U.S. military doctrine was also reviewed to determine its adequacy in providing guidance on HA operations.

For Operation Provide Comfort in 1991, the overall assessment is positive. While complications did occur, two particular events appear to have helped foster successful interaction. This was the first time the two parties had an opportunity to interact for an extensive period. As such, there was no history to overcome. In addition, the suddenness of the relief effort allowed the military to arrive in the region before the HA community, enabling the military to establish its own process for supporting the Kurdish refugees. By the time a large number of NGO/PVOs had arrived, OFDA, through its DART, was on

the scene and working with the military to transfer overall responsibility for the HA portion of the operation. While issues did arise, they were actually handled fairly easily by comparison to other humanitarian operations.

During Operation Restore Democracy in 1994, the situation was different. Overall, the assessment is poor. There was time to provide some prior planning, but it occurred too close to the operation and the decisions made regarding collaborative support were not communicated effectively to either the field units or the HA organizations onsite. USAID (OFDA) was not on the scene until 10 days after the other parties had met. Expectations were high on both sides and each was disappointed in the support provided by the other party initially. While the issues were eventually resolved, the beginning of the operation hampered effective HA.

By the time Operation Joint Endeavor began in 1995, some lessons regarding interaction between the parties were apparently learned. The review conducted indicates the two parties are working together fairly well. A question does exist about the senior U.S. leadership's commitment for continuing the operation and the HA community is concerned. Considering the environment that existed prior to the Dayton Peace Accords, it may be years before peace is sustained. The feeling of the HA community is that an extended military presence is essential to ensure peace has a chance.

An evaluation of joint doctrine revealed that while doctrine is available for use at the operational/tactical level, little guidance exists that discusses effective interaction at the strategic/operational level.

## **Assess Alternatives**

A number of alternatives to improve interaction between the military and the HA community were presented as a result of the findings, including some previously proposed by others. These options are as follows:

1. Define political objectives and how they meet U.S. national strategy upfront.
2. Ensure effective crossflow prior to HA efforts.
3. Incorporate processes for interaction into military and HA organizational doctrine.

While all of the alternatives have at least some merit, this assessment will focus on the feasibility of implementing each one.

Defining political objectives upfront will be difficult to accomplish. While it is theoretically sound, the political process of determining objectives and using it to establish specific exit criteria is cumbersome and lengthy. If the need for HA occurs suddenly, the best that can be done is to determine objectives and exit criteria while the operation is ongoing. However, as shown in the case of Haiti, when there is time to develop objectives and sound exit criteria, it should be done. In any operation involving the military casualties should be expected, otherwise its presence would not be necessary.

Ensuring effective crossflow prior to HA efforts is essential. Placing a USAID representative at each combatant command is an excellent idea at the operational level, but the only way to ensure the military presents a single face to the HA community is by establishing an interagency working group at the OSD/JCS level. Creating an IWG under the NSC was proposed by the director of OFDA in 1994, but yet to occur. While it might be a sound idea, its main purpose would be to guide the process of determining political objectives and exit criteria. As such, it would not improve the interaction between the military and HA community per se and its effectiveness is unknown.

Each of the items identified that incorporate processes for interaction into military and HA organizational doctrine should be closely considered for implementation. Each one will pay significant dividends in improving interaction during HA operations. By placing them in joint doctrine, it will ensure this relationship is emphasized.

### **Implications of the Study**

The U.S. military has increasingly found itself involved in humanitarian assistance operations and this trend should continue for the foreseeable future. The military can only profit by improving its interaction with the HA community. Benefits gained by collaboration include more effective operations, less duplication, and the leveraging of assets. However, these benefits will only accrue if joint doctrine is revised to focus on this critical relationship. Increased emphasis is required on means to collaborate with the HA community before an operation begins, preferably at the strategic/operational level.



## *Glossary*

ACSC	Air Command and Staff College
AU	Air University
AWC	Air War College
CIMIC	civil-military center
DART	Disaster Assistance Response Team
DHA	Department of Humanitarian Affairs
DOD	Department of Defense
GAO	Government Accounting Office
IRC	International Red Cross
IWG	interagency working group
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JTF	Joint Task Force
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCA	National Command Authority
NSC	National Security Council
OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
UN	United Nations
U.S.	United States
USA	United States Army
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USAF	United States Air Force
USMC	United States Marine Corps
USPACOM	United States Pacific Command

**civil-military operation s center (CMOC).** A mechanism to facilitate collaboration and coordination between the HA community and U.S. military.

**doctrine.** Fundamental principles used by military forces or elements thereof to guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgement in application.

**humanitarian assistance (HA).** Programs conducted to relieve or reduce the results of natural or manmade disasters or other endemic conditions such as human pain, disease, hunger, or privation that might present a serious threat to life or that can result in great damage to or loss of property. Humanitarian assistance provided by US forces is limited in scope and duration. The assistance provided is designed to supplement or complement the efforts or agencies that may have the primary responsibility for providing humanitarian assistance.

**humanitarian intervention.** The response to a pre-existing “complex humanitarian emergency” consisting of multiple causation (i.e. economic failure, drought etc. and usually conflict a significant increase in population mortality).

**humanitarian relief.** These operations include only those relief operations without a security component and would most likely be caused by a natural disaster.

**joint.** Connotes activities, operations, organizations, etc. in which elements of two or more Military Departments participate.

**non-governmental organization (NGO).** Any non-governmental entity involved in humanitarian work. NGOs draws on individuals or associations for membership. They include private voluntary organizations (PVOs); an American term for what the rest of the world calls NGOs.

**intergovernmental organization (IGO).** A formal arrangement transcending national boundaries that provides for the establishment of institutional machinery to facilitate cooperation among members in security, economic, social, or related fields. It builds on states and their governments. By this definition, the United Nations is considered an IGO.

**military operations other than war (MOOTW).** An aspect of military operations, it focuses on deterring war and promoting peace. There are two types:

**military operations other than war involving the use or threat of force.** Used when other instruments of national power are unable to influence a deteriorating or potentially hostile situation, military force may be required to demonstrate US resolve and capability, support the other instruments of national power, or terminate the situation on favorable terms. The general goals of US military operations during such are to support national objectives, deter war, and return to a state of peace. Such operations involve a greater risk that US forces could become involved in combat than operations conducted to promote peace.

**military operations other than war not involving the use or threat of force.** Use of military forces in peacetime to help keep the day-to-day tensions between nations below the threshold of armed conflict and maintain US influence in foreign lands. These operations, by definition, do not involve combat, but military forces always need to be prepared to protect themselves and respond to a changing situation.

**peacekeeping operations.** A concept that has evolved over time, it initially flowed from former UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld’s idea of preventive diplomacy. To Hammarskjöld, one of the primary purposes of the UN was to prevent wars from occurring, and if they did occur, to prevent them from becoming worse. To begin peacekeeping operations, three informal but very real conditions must be met. First all parties to the conflict must accept the presence of UN operations. Second, broad segments of the UN, and most particularly all five permanent members of the Security Council as well as at least four of the other ten Security Council members,

must support the operation. Third, UN members must be willing to provide the forces needed for peacekeeping operations and pay for their deployment.

**private voluntary organizations (PVOs).** Encompasses organizations of varying sizes, missions, geographic focuses, and capabilities. They work in many different development areas, including health, environment, and microenterprise development to address varied development needs. PVOs serve as a complement to traditional government-to-government assistance and can be a mechanism to strengthen indigenous community-level organizations.

**small scale contingencies.** A new term for military operations other than war.

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